



Activities with DAS

As of July, 2008

Current Activities:

1) Referrals of Qualified Candidates - In 2006 the Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS), the Department for the Blind (DOB) and the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) **established a partnership to enable IVRS and DOB to identify and refer qualified applicants with disabilities to state jobs.**

- Barb McClannahan, IVRS, Brenda Criswell, DOB and Brenda Reilley, DAS are the points of contact for coordinating and tracking referrals to State of Iowa Job Openings.
- With the applicant's permission, Barb and/or Brenda C. notify Brenda R. of qualified applicants who have been certified by IVRS/DOB as a person with a disability. These individuals are granted reasonable accommodations in testing as well as the interview process. In addition, Brenda can notify the supervisor responsible for the direct hire that the candidate can help meet their affirmative action goals and that IVRS/DOB can act as a consultant to address any reasonable accommodations.

Outcomes of referrals and tracking of candidates from IVRS:

2006:

**25 IVRS clients referred
7 candidates interviewed
2 hired**

2007:

**37 IVRS clients referred
23 candidates interviewed
5 hired**

2008 (to date):

**30 IVRS clients referred
6 candidates interviewed
2 hired**

2) Retention - IVRS/DOB both act as consultants to DAS on issues related to the **retention** of State employees with disabilities.

Activities Under Development:

1) Customized Training Opportunities and/or Internships -

- IVRS and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) are currently engaged in the development of customized training. DNR has identified opportunities to host a trainee who is not on payroll but learns the tasks and becomes a skilled candidate for employment. IVRS provides a stipend to the trainee during the training period. Three to four customized training opportunities have been identified to date, training plans are being written and trainees are being interviewed.
- We have had discussions within IVRS and with the Department of Public Health (DPH) regarding 780 hour appointments within the IT departments. These assignments allow candidates with disabilities to learn about employment opportunities within these state agencies as well as enhance their resumes with on-the-job work experience. This can also serve as an opportunity for IVRS job candidates to demonstrate their skills and abilities which can provide a competitive advantage when applying for permanent state positions.

2) Disability-Friendly Survey - The Employer Disability Resource Network (EDRN) is in the process of developing a Disability-Friendly Self-Assessment. This simple assessment is designed to help businesses find out if they offer an environment that is attractive to workers with disabilities.

Purpose:

- Improve employment outcomes of lowans with disabilities in state government.
- Improve workforce diversity and affirmative action goals.

Action Steps:

- Provide a self-assessment tool for state agencies/departments which will review the "friendliness" (readiness, openness) of the workplace for the targeted population.

Outcomes:

- State agencies consider opportunities to more easily identify and recruit qualified applicants with disabilities and develop action steps to:
 - Help job candidates feel comfortable identifying and addressing work-related disability issues.
 - Connect with EDRN and become familiar with Iowa resources that support the recruitment and retention efforts of persons with disabilities.
 - EDRN develops a better understanding of state agency needs which will result in building capacity to respond.